2

# An EPISTLE of *Caution* and *Advice* to *Parents*, Recommending a godly *Care* for the *Educating* their Children in a *Chriſtian Converſation.*

K
693. d 14
2

*Dear Friends,*

1. IT having pleaſed the Lord in his great Mercy, to viſit a People in this latter Age with the Knowledge of the Truth; and having brought us to a certain Underſtanding, That the Bleſſings thereof are only enjoyed in following the Lord in the ſtrait and narrow Way that leads to Life; wherein, by the daily Bearing the Holy Croſs, it hath, in a good degree, crucified us to the World, and the World unto us; whereby the Temptations of it become daily more and more weakened, and our Souls ſet free to ſerve the Lord in Righteouſneſs and Holineſs. And for as much, as next to our own Souls, our Off-ſpring are, or ought to be, the moſt immediate Objects of our Care and Concern, being a

peculiar Bleſſing from God; ſo we ought to be thankful to him for them, and wait upon him for Wiſdom from above, thereby to be enabled, rightly to diſcharge our Duties towards them, and then we ſhall be eminently careful to be good Examples to our Children, as well as diligently exerciſed in a conſcientious Care and Concern for them.

§ 2. And in order to make this the more Eaſy to us, and Effectual to them, Parents ſhould begin with their Children betimes, and endeavour, to teach them, as ſoon as they are capable of Inſtruction, that their Wills ought to be intirely ſubject to the Will of God, and to the good Advice of their Parents. And we deſire particular Care may be taken, to require nothing of them that is unreaſonable, or unbecoming religious and tender Parents; for where a due Care hath been neglected and put off, until they are grown up pretty far in Years, it hath been often ſeen by woeful Experience, that it is then too late to bring them into that Subjection which is their incumbent Duty.

§ 3. *Dear Friends*, Be early careful to keep them out of the vain Faſhions, and evil Ways of the World, and bring them up from the firſt, in *Plainneſs of Language, Apparel and Behaviour*, which may be a Means to prevent their being drawn there-

from,

from, by the Practice of others, when they are grown up.

§ 4. Be careful to bring your Children, in their young Years, to Meetings, not only on the first Day of the Week, but on other Days also; which has been of great Advantage to many; and instruct them to sit sober when there, and to have an awful Sense of God upon their Minds, and to be diligent in attending the Testimonies of Truth, when Testimonies are born, that they may feel the Love of God to season their Spirits.

§ 5. And we entreat and exhort Friends, to labour with their Minds, stay'd in the Gift of God, to bring their Children to a Sense of the same Gift in themselves, impressing on their Minds an Awe and Fear towards Him, *which is the Beginning of Wisdom.* And as they advance in Years cause them frequently and reverently to read the Holy Scriptures, and endeavour to make them sensible of the great Love of God in sending his Son Christ Jesus into the World; as also, of the great Benefit of his Sufferings, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, and Mediation, in order to the great Work of Salvation; instructing them in the Work of Sanctification, through his blessed Spirit, that they may know the Operation thereof, against every Thing that is wrong, and thereby may come to distinguish be-

tween Good and Evil in themſelves, and ſee the great Benefit there is in a ſober, virtuous, and religious Life, and the many Miſchiefs and ill Conſequences that attend the contrary, that ſo they may embrace the one and avoid the other; for as they learn to make a godly Converſation their Choice in their young and tender Years, the Croſs of Chriſt will become eaſy unto them.

§ 6. And as the Minds of Children are early buſied about ſomething or other, and apt to receive any Impreſſions, we adviſe, That beſide the Reading the Holy Scriptures, they may have the Advantage of reading other good Books, tending to promote the true Principles of the Chriſtian Religion.

And we earneſtly exhort and entreat all Friends, as much as in them lies, to keep their Children from reading prophane Books, Romances, and Pamphlets, which tend to infect the Minds of Youth, and which Children are too apt to pleaſe themſelves with.

§ 7. And Friends are deſired to remember, That indulging them in Pride, Idleneſs, and Luxury, is a great Fault in Parents, as well as of dangerous Conſequence to Children, according to the Teſtimony of *Ezekiel*, Chap. xvi. ver. 49, 50. *Behold this was the Iniquity of* Sodom, *Pride, Fulneſs of Bread, and Abundance of Idleneſs was in her, and*

*in*

*in her Daughters, neither did she strengthen the Hand of the Poor and Needy: And they were Haughty, and committed Abomination before me, therefore I took them away as I saw good.* Wherefore Parents ought to be very careful to Restrain their Children from those Things which lay a Foundation for very great Evils. And when they perceive an Inclination in them to Pride, to take care no ways to promote or encourage it, but on the contrary, as much as may be, restrain it. And an especial Concern should be early taken, to prevent a Habit of Idleness, and therefore some Imployment, suitable to their Circumstances, ought to be provided for them.

§ 8. For those who are bred up in Pride and Idleness, do often, if their Circumstances permit it, live in Luxury, and spend their Thoughts (that might be better employ'd) in contriving what they shall eat and drink, and cloath themselves withal; and sometimes can hardly invent any Thing delicate enough for them; so that it is no wonder that many, whose Education has been after this manner, spend their precious Time and Substance about Things which are prejudicial to the Health and Welfare both of Body and Soul, and reproachful to our holy Profession. And to the End that the Labours and good Advice of Parents may take the better Effect, great

Care

Care ſhould be taken to keep Children out of bad Company, and to have ſuch Servants as are religiouſly enclined, ſober, diſcreet, and orderly; for it hath been found by Experience, That ſuch Servants who are Strangers to the Croſs of Chriſt, have been a Means to turn many of our Friends Children from the Plainneſs and Simplicity of the Truth, and lead them into vain and vicious Company, whereby they have been greatly corrupted in their Minds, and a Spirit of undue Liberty hath prevailed to their great Hurt.

§ 9. And we believe Friends might find it profitable, as they feel the Lord ſeaſoning their Spirits thereunto, to wait upon Him with their Children in their Families for the Manifeſtation of his Bleſſed Power, that they may witneſs his Seed of Life and Grace in their Hearts, to beget in them a living Knowledge, and Love of Truth in themſelves, that they may come to know the Work of Sanctification and Regeneration; the Conſequence of which will be, that virtuous, holy, and religious Converſation, which we deſire they may grow up in, and then they will be an Ornament to our holy Profeſſion, and be preſerved from the ſorrowful Effect of a looſe and vicious Conduct; and we Queſtion not, but as Friends are duly exerciſed herein, the Lord will of his Mercy open in them ſuitable Counſel and

and Advice to their Children and Families, and will give a Bleſſing to their ſincere Endeavours.

§ 10. And let it be alſo the Care of Friends, at proper Seaſons, to tell their Children their own Experience, and what God hath done for their Souls: For it is very often ſeen, that the good Impreſſions that Children receive in their tender Years from their Parents are not eaſily worn out. As the Pſalmiſt ſays, *We have heard with our Ears, O God, our Fathers have told us, what Works thou didſt in their Days, in the Times of old*, Pſal. 44.

§ 11. And as there is an incumbent Duty on Parents in the Education of their Children; ſo the ſame lies on School-Maſters, and therefore what is herein recommended to Parents, ought to be put in Practice (as much as may be) by Maſters, Miſtreſſes, and Tutors of Children; and thoſe School-Maſters that teach the *Latin* and *Greek* Tongues ſhould be careful not to make uſe (in their ſeveral Schools) of any *Heathen* Authors, that tend to Profaneneſs, Laſciviouſneſs, or Immorality.

So, *dear Friends*, we having an earneſt Deſire that Truth may proſper, and, that *Zion may become an eternal Excellency, and* Jeruſalem *the Praiſe of the whole Earth*, and our Children may follow the Steps of our worthy Antients; and, that the Name of

the

the Lord may be magnified from Generation to Generation, do in a Chriſtian Concern of Mind recommend theſe Things to you, heartily deſiring, that you may find the ſame Concern to put them in practice, as have been on Friends Minds in this Meeting to recommend them to you.

*Lond.* the 29th of the
9th *Month*, 1723.

*By* Direction *of the*
Yearly-Meeting.